

Historic  
Resource  
Inventory  
CITY OF PORTLAND, OREGON



7-024-01644

1644 N.E. Twenty-fourth Avenue

Carter's, Block 2, West 1' of Lot 2, Lots 3, 4, Except North 10' in E.  
Broadway

QUARTER SECTION MAP #: 2833

Lloyd Center

ORIGINAL NAME: Church of Good Tidings

OTHER NAMES: Metropolitan Community Church, Gay Church, William Howard Taft  
Building

ORIGINAL FUNCTION: Church

DATE BUILT: ca. 1906

STYLE: Shingle Style, Arts and Crafts

TAX ASSESSOR'S ACCOUNT #: R-14020-0110

ZONING: C2

Rank II

SPECIAL FEATURES AND MATERIALS:

Steeply-pitched, multi-gable roof with wide eaves. Finial at tip of gable.  
Corner tower with pyramidal roof crowned with finial. Shingle siding.  
Round-headed windows. Leaded and stained-glass windows. Decorative  
stickwork. Bracketed, gabled hood at entry.

*SPECIAL F/M - SIGNIFICANT ALTERATION:*

*Wood porch and steps replaced with concrete, 1946.*

*AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: Architecture, Religion, Social*

*Social: This church is referred to by neighborhood residents as Portland's "Gay" church. The building was put on the market several years ago as the "William Howard Taft" building. Taft was allegedly present at the dedication ceremony in 1906. A visit by Herbert Hoover documented in a photograph at the Oregon Historical Society.*

*BIBLIOGRAPHY:*

*City of Portland Buildings Bureau microform and card files.*

*Multnomah County Tax Assessor records, microform, automated data files, and card files (Portland, 1980).*

*1644 N.E. Twenty-fourth Avenue, photograph, OHS Collection.*

*Lloyd Center Inventory, Sullivan's Gulch Neighborhood Association Collection.*

*MAJOR ALTERATIONS: 1923/134003*

*1946/282613*

*Present owner as of May 1981: First Church of Divine Science of Portland Oregon*

*MAILING ADDRESS: 1644 N.E. Twenty-fourth Avenue, Portland 97232*

*No Preservation Funding*

*Negative: 1200-33*

*Score - Design/Construction: 9*

*Score - Historical: 5*

*Score - Rarity:*

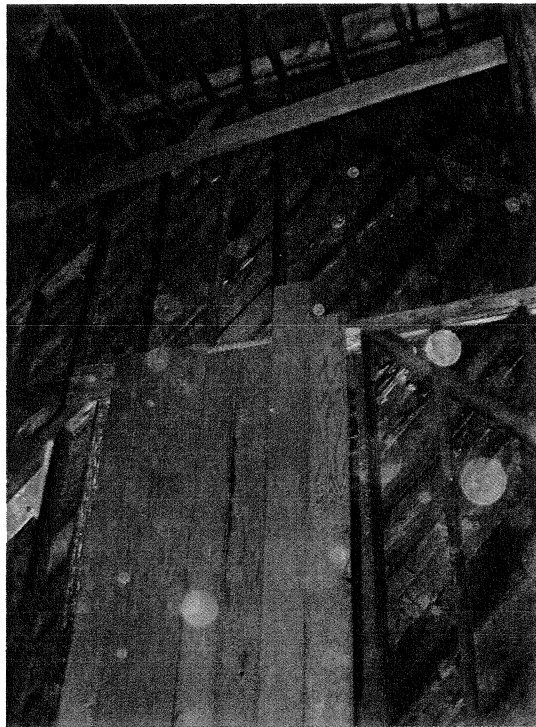
*Score - Environment: 10*

*Score - Integrity: 10*

*Score - Intrinsic: 14*

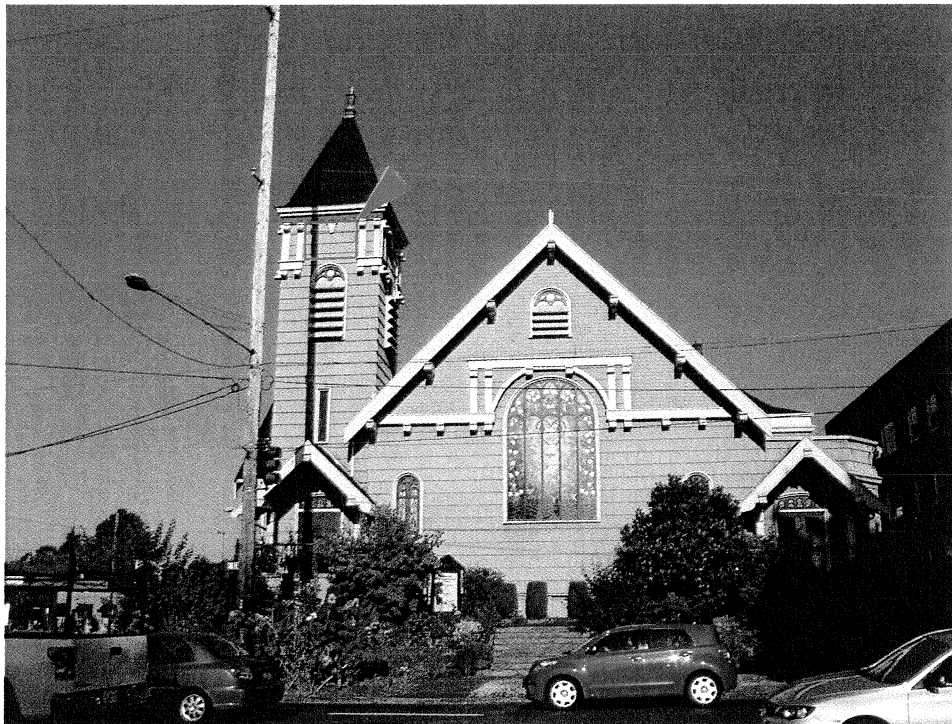
*Score - Contextual: 20*

*Score - Total: 69*



View: west interior wall of tower  
Approx. distance: NA  
Direction: NA

Photographer: Bernadette Niederer  
Date recorded: 8/18/2010  
Focal length: 7mm



View: 1 ( toward the installation)  
Approx. distance: 50 ft.  
Direction: east

Photographer: Bernadette Niederer  
Date recorded: 8/18/2010  
Focal length: 7mm

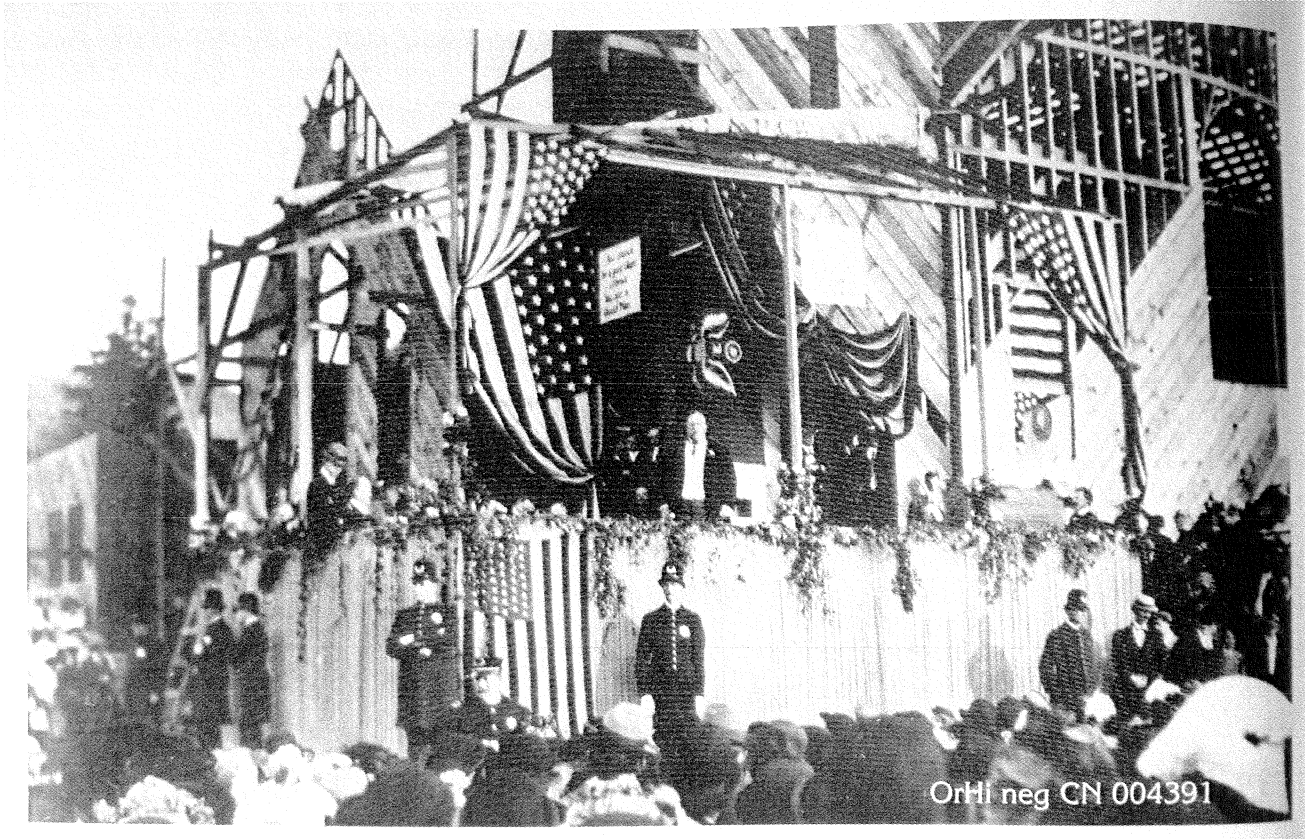


Figure 07. Photo of the laying of the cornerstone by President William Howard Taft on October 3, 1909 (OrHi CN 004391).

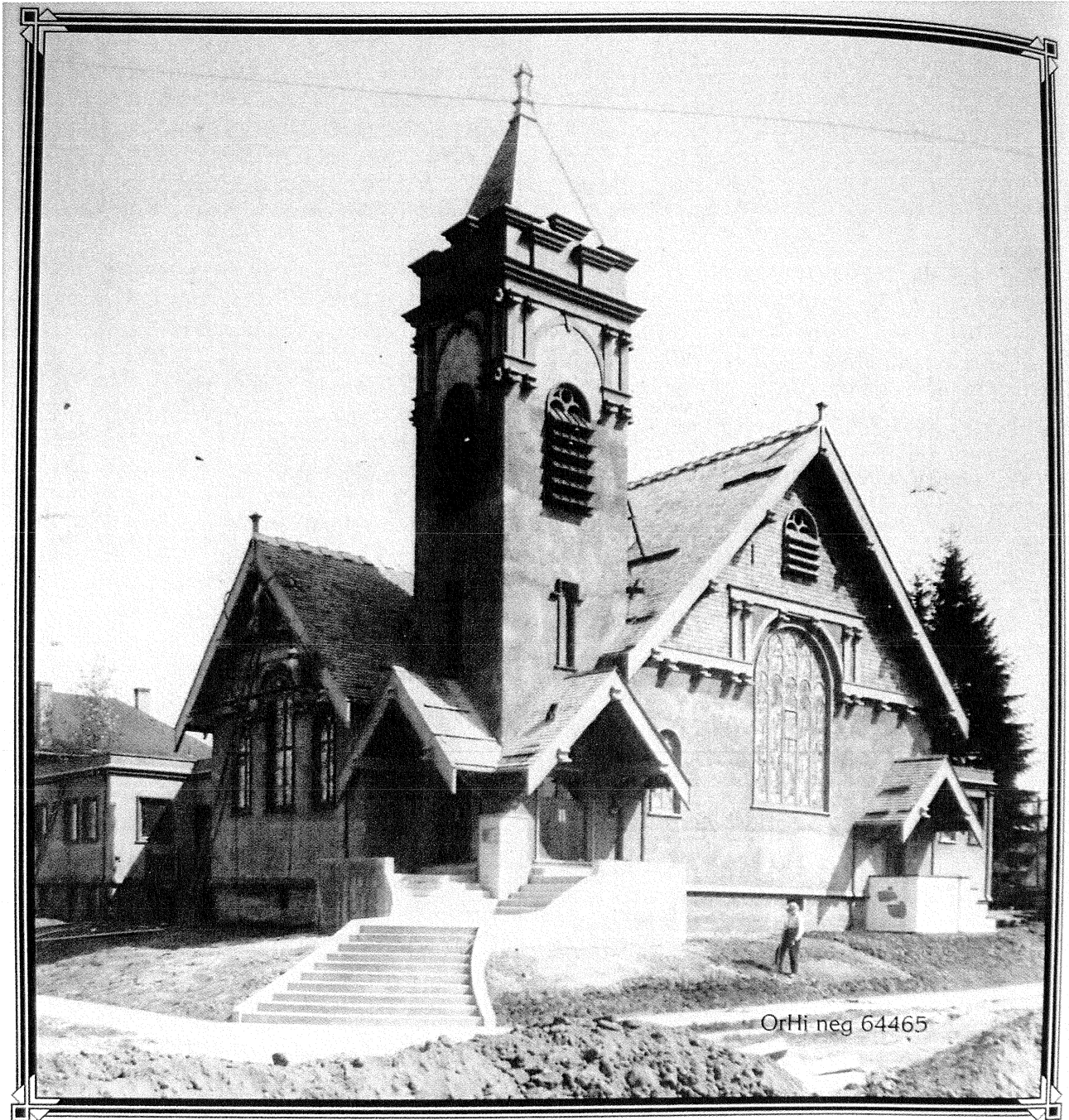


Figure 08. Photo of First Universalist Church of Good Tidings (aka the Metropolitan Community Church) nearing its completion in May 1910 (OrHi 64465).

# OREGON FCC SECTION 106 SURVEY FORM

Rev. 6/05

Agency/Project: <b>FCC - Adapt Engineering, Inc. / Metropolitan Church #OR-POR451C</b>		
Address: <b>2400 NE Broadway</b>	City: <b>Portland</b>	ZIP Code: <b>97232</b>
Name: <b>First Universalist Church of Good Tidings</b>	County: <b>Multnomah</b>	Built: <b>1909</b>
Historic Use: <b>Religion - church</b>	Current Use: <b>Religion - church</b>	
Alterations: <b>Stucco replaced with raked wood shingles; staircase lost to road; west window replaced af</b>		Integrity: <b>Good</b>

**Photo of Resource:**

Number on Resource Map: **1**  
 Taken on: **8/18/2010**  
 Focal length: **7mm**



Preliminary National Register Findings:	<input type="checkbox"/> National Register listed <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Not Eligible:</i>	<i>Potentially Eligible:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> But reversible <input type="checkbox"/> Irretrievable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Individually <input type="checkbox"/> Lacks distinction <input type="checkbox"/> As part of District <input type="checkbox"/> Not 50 years old
---	--	---	---

**Photo Towards Installation:**

Taken on: **8/18/2010**  
 Focal length: **7mm**  
 Approximate distance to resource: **102 ft**  
 Direction from resource to installation: **southwest**



Preliminary Effect Findings:     No effect     No adverse effect     Adverse effect

Surveyor: <b>Dave Pinyerd / Historic Preservation Northwest</b>	Date recorded: <b>8/18/2010</b>
---	---------------------------------

Map number: 1

Name: First Universalist Church of Good Tidings

Street: 2400 NE Broadway

City State ZIP: Portland OR 97232

NR findings: Potentially eligible individually

Effect findings: No historic properties adversely affected

Effect: In 1909 the Portland Congregation of the Universalist General Convention (which became the American Universalist Church in 1942 and merged with the American Unitarian Association in 1961) acquired land to construct a new church at the southeast corner of what is now Broadway and NE 24th Avenue. The building permit, issued in August 1909 lists the builder as E.M. Rasmussen, but does not identify an architect. Original elevation drawings also fail to list a designer and reveal a substantial change in appearance from drawing to as-built, mutating from Picturesque Gothic to Craftsman.

On Sunday, October 3rd, 1909 the under-construction First Universalist Church of Good Tidings received a singular honor when its cornerstone was laid by President William Howard Taft. At the time, Taft was on a two-month rail tour of the United States during which he laid a number of cornerstones at a wide variety of buildings including a Congregational Church in Washington, a Jewish tabernacle in Pittsburgh and a Roman Catholic University at Helena. An estimated crowd of 15,000 gathered to view the President set two flat slabs into the mortar and deliver a substantial speech touching on the separation of church and state, and religious tolerance.

The Universalist Congregation remained in the building until 1917. It is unclear what caused the membership to shut the church at that time, possibly the financial burden incurred during construction. It remained vacant until 1919 when it became the Grace English Lutheran Church.

The Lutheran Church remained in the building until 1963, when it moved into a new church at NE 76th and Fremont. The building at Broadway and NE 24th was then sold to the Church of Divine Science which remained in the building until 1977. By that time there were fewer than 20 active members, most of them elderly, in the Church of Divine Science. The church building was once again sold, this time to the Metropolitan Community Church of Portland, which continues to occupy the structure in 2010.

The First Universalist Church of Good Tidings at 2400 NE Broadway, now known as the Metropolitan Community Church, was built 1909-10. The craftsman church sits on a prominent corner of Broadway and NE 24th Avenue. The church is entered through the tower at the northwest corner. Originally it had a flowing staircase and two entrances at the corner; however, the staircase and the north entrance were lost to road widening in 1930. Retaining walls were also added, particularly following Broadway's new sidewalks.

The gable roof structure is finished with composition shingles, plain finials and a large bargeboard. It is supported by fancy purlins at the eave. The cladding is currently raked wood shingles; however, the original cladding was rough stucco. (The raked wood shingles are shown in place soon after the 1930 street widening based on a photo in the city archives.) The gable ends are also clad in